

UNDERSTANDING LEGITIMACY AND IMPACT WITHIN DIFFERENTIATED ACADEMIC MARKETS

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ABSTRACT

Stakeholders continue to question the value of higher education policies, practices and costs in an era of declining enrollments and shrinking budgets. In addition, they question the very nature of the knowledge creation mechanisms (e.g., research) that lie at the heart of the value proposition for post-secondary educational institutions. The purpose of this paper is to review the role of conceptions of research legitimacy and impact as manifestations of the strategic intent of business schools, and to reframe discussions of research impact in terms of an underlying strategic orientation to the institution's primary stakeholders. Implications for a more mission-focused implementation of research activities are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

There are a host of seemingly insoluble problems in higher education today, as students, parents, educators and government officials continue to attest (Arum & Roksa, 2011; Brandon, 2010; Deresiewicz, 2015; Hacker & Drefus, 2011; Khurana, 2007). Within business schools, we have been told that the end is near (Pfeffer & Fong, 2002), that management education is at risk (Olian, 2002), if not hopelessly adrift (Arum & Roksa, 2011), and that we are no longer relevant (Pearce & Huang, 2012; Zell, 2005) or legitimate (Alajoutsijarvi, Juusola, & Siltaoja, 2015). Not only do stakeholders question the value of higher education policies, practices and costs in an era of declining enrollments and shrinking budgets, they question the very nature of the knowledge creation mechanisms (e.g., research) that lie at the heart of the value proposition for post-secondary institutions (Pearce & Huang, 2012). Indeed, an ever increasing volume of journal space is being devoted to detailing the unarrested slide of an academic body which seems, if you are to believe authors, editors and accrediting bodies, to care little, or not enough, about producing legitimate and impactful research (Adler & Harzing, 2009; Aguinis, Shapiro, Antonacopoulou, & Cummings, 2014; Alajoutsijarvi, Juusola, & Siltaoja, 2015; Alvesson & Gabriel, 2013; Alvesson & Sandberg, 2013; Bailey, 2013; Birkinshaw, Healey, Suddaby, & Weber, 2014; Pearce & Huang, 2012; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002; Trank & Rynes, 2003).

The purpose of this paper is to review the role of conceptions of research legitimacy and impact as manifestations

of the strategic intent of business schools, and to reframe discussions of research impact in terms of an underlying strategic orientation to the institution's primary stakeholders. I review conceptions of legitimacy and impact within the field of management, define a continuum of strategic orientations to stakeholder groups who are the primary customers for research outputs, note some concerns regarding the tendency toward isomorphism in research generation and publication, and close with a call to administrators and educators to better define and implement strategies to maximize the impact of their institution's research contributions in light of the choice of strategic orientation.

LEGITIMACY AND IMPACT

As an academic body, it is understandable that much has been written about the craft of management research and the creation of knowledge in the management discipline (Birkinshaw, Healey, Suddaby, & Weber, 2014; Rynes, 2007; Zell, 2005), the value of our research (AACSB International, 2008; Aguinis, Suarez-Gonzalez, Lannelongue & Joo, 2012; Bedeian, Cavazos, Hunt, & Jauch, 2010; Extejt & Smith, 1990; Judge, Colbert, Cable, & Rynes, 2007; Pearce & Huang, 2012; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Bachrach, 2008; Starbuck, 2005), the nature and extent of scholarly influence (Aguinis, Suarez-Gonzalez, Lannelongue & Joo, 2012; Judge, Cable, Colbert, & Rynes, 2007; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Bachrach, & Podsakoff, 2005; Podsakoff et al., 2008), and the measurement of research productivity (Adler & Harzing,

2009; Buchheit, Collins, & Reitenga, 2002; Long, Bowers, Barnett, & White, 1998; Podsakoff et al., 2008; Trieschmann, Dennis, Northcraft, & Niemi, 2000), among other things. A number of factors have driven these examinations into the research of management research, but an important explanation has to be that research should matter to what we do as an academic body. The differentiating purpose of post-secondary education is the generation of new knowledge in a variety of disciplines. Instruction exists as a way to disseminate this new knowledge, but instruction serves fundamentally instrumental purposes – it is a means to affect a relatively permanent change in the behavior individuals, groups and organizations based on new information, continually discovered. Therefore, the scholarly currency (medium of exchange/store of individual academic value) of the members of the Academy of Management has always been the record of one's publications or research outputs (Aguinis, Suarez-González, Lannelongue, & Joo, 2012). As such, we have devised ways to evaluate to worth/value of various research publications, and while there may not be complete agreement on journal rankings and measures of journal quality, there is relative consensus about the comparative worth/value of one journal or set of journals over others, especially among faculty at the leading business schools.

Criteria for tenure and promotion at the top business schools (Mudambi, Hannigan & Kline, 2012) have always emphasized the currency associated with the production of research outputs in top-tier or so-called "A" journals (Starbuck, 2005; Trieschmann et al., 2000), and an increased emphasis on the concept of research "impact" by AACSB (AACSB International, 2008) has prodded more schools to analyze the relevance of their research (Adler & Harzing, 2009; Pearce & Huang, 2012). The rationale for this particular descriptive word, impact, can be framed and understood with reference to the concept of legitimacy (Alajoutsijarvi, Juusola, & Siltaoja, 2015; Bailey, 2013; Rynes & Brown, 2011). Legitimacy refers to the perception that what an organization or group of people does is proper and appropriate (Rynes & Brown, 2011). Legitimacy ensures continued survival and often results in increased power and influence, and continued access to resources. It only seems logical that we take steps to analyze and report on the legitimacy of our work.

Subsequently, researchers have tried to identify the top journal outlets (Currie & Pandher, 2013; Long, Bowers, Barnett, & White, 1998; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Bachrach, & Podsakoff, 2005; Podsakoff et al., 2008), the factors which lead to publication in the top outlets (Long et al., 1998; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Bachrach, & Podsakoff, 2005; Podsakoff et al., 2008; Valle & Schultz, 2011), and the consequences of top tier research productivity, some of which include increased personal and in-

stitutional prestige (Bedeian et al., 2010; Podsakoff et al., 2008), enhanced institutional reputations (Boyd, Bergh & Ketchen, 2010; Rindova, Williamson, Petkova, & Sever, 2005), and the allocation of resources and rewards to individual faculty members (Aguinis, Suarez-Gonzalez, Lannelongue & Joo, 2012; Gomez-Mejia & Balkan, 1992; Mittal, Feick & Murshed, 2008). While this research may or may not be interesting in itself, and may or may not be of some merit for proving legitimacy, it is clear that this research highlights the competitive strategy choices available to academic researchers at different institutions. For most, legitimacy and impact are a matter of how you define the words within an operational context.

Trieschmann et al. (2000) suggested that business schools typically acknowledge two main constituencies – students/business practitioners and academics. They also suggested that when resources were relatively scarce, schools often focus on one constituency over the other. In doing so, they suggested that business schools employ different adaptive organizational strategies and use different measures to assess unit performance. They suggested that private institutions, which tend to be more dependent on students and businesses for resources, tend to use their scarce resources for knowledge exploitation (through instruction, particularly in highly visible MBA programs), whereas public universities, which are less tuition driven, tend to use their scarce resources for knowledge exploration (through research). On the other hand, Trieschmann et al. (2000) found that schools (both public and private) with greater human, social and financial resources had greater research productivity and quality, as did Podsakoff et al. (2008) and Valle and Schultz (2011), and that public flagship institutions, in general, tend to focus their resources more on exploration (research) activities and their attendant outcome measures.

A RESOURCE-BASED VIEW OF LEGITIMACY AND IMPACT

The strategic choice to explore or exploit has more to do with the administration and deployment of resources (resource-based view—see Barney, 1991; Wernerfelt, 1984) than conscious choices associated with a movement between categories (exploitation to exploration, and vice versa). Institutions with sufficient resources to enact an exploration strategic orientation include the prominent private universities and the flagship state institutions (see Podsakoff et al., 2008), and their resources can be grouped into three broad categories. One category of resource endowments includes human capital. The most research productive institutions (public and private) have doctoral programs and they also possess the ability to attract the best doctoral students and faculty. Long et al. (1998) sug-

gested that prestige, or status, affected student and faculty recruitment, and in turn, research productivity. They hypothesized that higher status schools would be able to recruit doctoral students of better input quality. Second, they suggested that higher status schools could provide their doctoral students with better preparation for academic research, thus increasing specific human capital. It might be the case that at higher status schools, doctoral students receive better mentoring in the research process, which allows them to develop a better publication record and better developed research skills, all of which can help secure better quality jobs (see, e.g., Ferris, Perrewé, & Buckley, 2009). Bedeian et al. (2010) argued that this form of cumulative advantage could help explain career mobility within strata in the management discipline. Podsakoff et al. (2008) and Valle and Schultz (2011) found that higher status was associated with increased top-tier research productivity. Williamson and Cable (2003) found that doctoral student research productivity was a function of dissertation advisor research productivity and the research output of a faculty member's academic origin and initial placement.

A second category of resources includes social capital. D'Aveni (1996) suggested that hierarchies based on prestige or status rankings tend to create closed systems of institutional groupings, where schools trade outputs (e.g., Ph.D. graduates) and share resources (e.g., faculty research co-generation) within these groupings in an attempt to maintain their status. Blumberg and Pringle (1982) emphasized the increased opportunities associated with social groupings and subsequent effects on performance. Their lesson continues to remind us that the presence or absence of important social variables may dramatically impact outcomes. In the context of research productivity, those factors may include things like access to, and interaction with, top research mentors, the availability of research assistants, access to symposia and conferences where professional connections can be made, and other opportunities, such as opportunities to join journal editorial boards (Bedeian, Van Fleet & Hyman, 2009; Judge, Weber, & Muller-Kahle, 2012; Podsakoff et al., 2008), which may not be available to researchers at lower status institutions. The value of social capital with regard to research productivity is that these high prestige groupings may indeed create what D' Aveni referred to as "mutually reinforcing and supportive homosocial reproduction networks" (1996: 166) where there is a greater likelihood of research productivity. Rynes and Brown (2011) also suggest that institutions with higher legitimacy can attract more capable human resources than those institutions with lower legitimacy. In other words, better schools are able to attract better faculty (emphasis mine).

The final category of resources includes financial resources. The factors that have been previously shown to positively impact faculty research productivity include increased financial support and incentives (Podsakoff et al., 2008; Trieschmann et al., 2000; Tsui, 1990). It only makes sense that private institutions with extensive financial resources (e.g., large endowments, grants, etc.), or flagship public institutions, would have the ability and orientation to pay for, and support, exploration activities in the form of cutting-edge discipline-based research. As Trieschmann et al. (2000) suggested, most private institutions are tuition driven, and therefore must develop a strategic orientation that is necessarily exploitative. Their value lies in servicing their immediate stakeholders (students and businesses) through undergraduate and MBA programs that emphasize applied learning.

There should be no doubt that the resulting job context at institutions with an exploration research focus is appreciably different than the job context at exploitation institutions. The job context factors that have been previously shown (in the management discipline and in other disciplines) to positively impact faculty research productivity include increased individual faculty financial support and incentives (Gomez-Mejia & Balkin, 1992; Hearn, 1999; Podsakoff et al., 2008; Trieschmann et al., 2000; Tsui, 1990), schools/departments with doctoral programs (Podsakoff et al., 2008; Valle & Schultz, 2011), and a larger percentage of academic work hours devoted to research (Hedrick, Henson, Krieg, & Wassell, 2010) due to smaller faculty teaching loads (Bellas & Toutkoushian, 1999; Hedrick, Henson, Krieg, & Wassell, 2010; Stark & Miller, 1976). In short, institutions with an exploration research focus are research machines – the machine is designed to maximize the production of exemplary theoretical and empirical discipline-based research.

This results in two different general types of institutions, each with its own strategic focus, its own market, customers and stakeholders. I realize that this dichotomy is artificial and does not fully or adequately describe the wide range of educational institutions, missions and related activities, but it serves as a useful starting point for discussion. The exploration-focused institutions, generally, spend the bulk of their resources developing, supporting, and executing significant discipline-based research. The exploitation-focused institutions, generally, spend the bulk of their resources developing, supporting, and executing distinctive pedagogies and programs designed to appeal to their market's undergraduate/MBA students and business practitioners.

Institutions in each market domain can exhibit varying degrees of legitimacy/impact, depending on the outputs most valued by the majority of their stakeholders. For

the exploration focused institutions, value is defined by the incidence of high impact, discipline-based research produced by the institution's faculty (Aguinis, Suarez-González, Lannelongue, & Joo, 2012). As Podsakoff et al. (2008: 649) demonstrated, 28 of the 30 top journals (based on measures of journal influence) in the management discipline focus on discipline-based empirical and theoretical research – only 2 (Harvard Business Review and California Management Review) can be considered applied or managerially-relevant outlets. For the exploitation focused institutions, value is defined primarily by other factors (e.g., school rankings in the popular press) related to instruction and community/stakeholder service. In summary, it is primarily the institutions focused on exploration that have the most impact on management knowledge creation. Conversely, institutions focused on exploitation engage primarily in activities that disseminate the outputs of exploration research.

UNDERSTANDING LEGITIMACY AND IMPACT WITHIN EACH STRATEGIC DOMAIN

Whether by design or as a consequence of environmental contingencies, each institution has adopted a unique strategic orientation with regard to competition and market development. This is a good thing, for when there is an appropriate match between strategy and environment, organizations experience greater success (Ketchen et al., 1997). One can easily imagine the difficulties associated with exploitation focused institutions attempting to develop reputations for high quality research; unless the appropriate resources for such a strategic orientation are present (and they usually never are present), such a goal will prove elusive and frustrating for all stakeholders. Therefore, there appears to be an understandable bifurcation in institutional mission and research strategy across the field of management. For individual institutions, success in their mission domain can justifiably be considered the evidence of legitimacy. Just as there are high prestige institutions that continuously produce high quality research outputs, there are high prestige institutions that excel at knowledge dissemination (e.g., Babson College, Wake Forest University) and are the epitome of success in their market domain.

The advantages which accrue to institutions with a strategic orientation toward high-impact empirical and theoretical discipline-based research are many. They include the ability to attract, develop and maintain a faculty complement which is capable of producing significant, legitimate research (Rynes & Brown, 2011). The composite human/social/financial capital of these institutions is great. These institutions attract top researchers and place them within a milieu which supports and nurtures their research pro-

ductivity by providing the appropriate human, social and financial resources. These institutions are also able to attract doctoral students who contribute to the research mission (Podsakoff et al., 2008, lists the 100 most-cited universities in the field of management – the vast majority are doctoral institutions). These faculty have lower teaching loads and often teach doctoral seminars which are focused on furthering knowledge in their chosen research area (Valle & Schultz, 2011). Doctoral faculty often have lesser service requirements (e.g., student advising and committee work) and are more focused on editorial board memberships and journal service, conference activities, and other external activities that support their research productivity. Given this environment and context, it is easy to see why the top universities excel at producing exploration-focused research – and why they are generally considered to be legitimate within their market domain.

There are also advantages associated with a strategic orientation toward the exploitation of new knowledge through teaching/learning and business outreach activities. Faculty at these institutions serve as an important interface linking management theory and management practice. They are most likely to be attuned to changes in management practice which necessitate changes in SoTL activities within the management disciplines. These institutions are also more likely to be at the cutting edge of new pedagogical approaches that blend traditional pedagogy with emerging technologies. There is great value, and an underlying value proposition, in being able to translate the leading research in the field so that it is more amenable to consumption by students and practitioners – translation is inherently more actionable (Pearce & Huang, 2012). Faculty at exploitation institutions are the boundary spanners (Tushman, 1977) of the academy and should be more aware of trends or broad changes in managerial practice. In short, there are distinct advantages to having separate groups of institutions with separate research and teaching foci.

CONCERN FOR INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEMS

But there are also problems with relying on one model for educating, socializing and staffing faculty bodies for different market domains, and these problems disadvantage both the development of management theory and the practice of management. The threats associated with this distinct delineation of research orientations include a reduction in research diversity and approaches to research, a decrease in the interactions and information sharing between the two groups, and a proliferation of research based on a rational-deductive model from the exploration domain which does not suit the resources, perspectives and needs of stakeholders in the exploitation domain.

D'Aveni (1996) suggested that hierarchies based on prestige or status rankings tended to create closed systems of institutional groupings. These closed systems were considered previously in this paper as a distinct advantage for research production. However, given that these systems tend to remain somewhat closed to a limited subset of institutions, the likelihood of intellectual isomorphism (Alvesson & Gabriel, 2013; Bailey, 2013) within these closed groups' increases. Hambrick (1994) referred to this setup as a "closed incestuous loop" where scholars both produce and consume their own research (p. 13). Alvesson and Gabriel (2013) lament the increasingly formulaic nature of management research, resulting in research that they argue is characterized by increased specialization, gap-spotting incrementalism, ultra-rationalism, standardized text structures, and the creation of manuscripts targeted toward a sympathetic sub-community of like-minded researchers. The rational-empirical, deductive approach to management research practiced by faculty at the leading U.S. universities dominates the top-tier journals, and with modest exceptions, excludes the inductive, qualitative approaches to research practiced by faculty at the leading universities outside the U.S. The current predominant exploration formula (a U.S.-centric model) does not bode well for research diversity and knowledge creation.

Growth in the knowledge base in the field of management requires the active interplay of ideas, concepts and theories. We know that the quality of ideas within a group increases when the number of group members grows (e.g., Mathieu, Maynard, Rapp, & Gilson, 2008). In the marketplace of ideas, a larger number of competitors and competing research models and approaches should contribute to a healthier and more robust market. Alvesson and Gabriel (2013) refer to this as polymorphic research, or research using a variety of structures, styles and research approaches. Anything which limits ideas and competing perspectives is likely to do the opposite.

We should also be concerned about a reduction in the interactions and information sharing between the two groups. Granted, given their different missions and capabilities, it is understandable that each group would develop different systems and mechanisms to optimize and pursue their strategic orientations. However, this reality increases the likelihood that the academy will fragment into two very different groups, the "thinkers" and the "do-ers". Imagine a field where the individuals who develop and test theory come from an increasingly small and isomorphic group. With no feedback mechanisms from those on the outside of the closed system you might eventually see a dysfunctional closed-loop system that only listens to itself, writes for itself, and publishes for itself (Hambrick, 1994). On the other hand, a vigorous interchange of ideas and insights should be the goal of the

academy. And while I can think of individuals who excel in both domains, the vast majority of faculty do their best to maximize their value within their market domains. While the Academy of Management has broadened the scope of its annual conference and added new journals to include and highlight alternative research methodologies and applied and pedagogical research, the conference and journals are still dominated by faculty from research intensive, exploration focused institutions, and the limited conversations engaged in in journals and at conferences are predominantly about the legitimacy and impact of contributions in the top journals (Pearce & Huang, 2012; Rynes & Brown, 2011).

A growing gulf between the two groups may contribute to a situation where some individuals may be less and less inclined to participate in a publication process dominated by gatekeepers from the exploration focused institutions. These individuals may develop their own publication outlets for research which might generously be characterized as less impactful. Trained in the rational deductive tradition of incremental knowledge generation, these researchers may be wasting their limited time and resources studying the wrong things, in the wrong way, for the wrong reasons, and for the wrong audience. Alvesson and Gabriel (2013) put it less delicately when quoting a researcher who was increasingly concerned about the diffusion of research outputs— "There are more unqualified people pumping more crap into more unread outlets than ever before in history" (p246). The top outlets in the management discipline have been known for a long time, and the list remains relatively unchanged (See Podsakoff, et al., 2005). However, the number of outlets (journals) in management has grown from 540 in 2001 to 1150 in 2011 – a 100% increase over that period (Cabell's, 2011). Clearly, the market has responded to the perceived need for additional outlets, though the quality of the final products in some of these new outlets may leave some with concerns. Publish or perish, not quality, has become the driver of outlet volume, and the market for ideas is becoming increasingly muddled and muddied. The consuming public for exploitation institutions (undergraduate/ MBA students and business practitioners) has little knowledge of the journals which are a significant source of new knowledge in the field (Pearce & Huang, 2012). Witness the repeated fads and rebranded theories in management education and their effect on the trust between practitioners and academics. We risk eroding that trust further if we do not find ways to expand and enhance knowledge generation and dissemination, with appropriate attention to measures of quality and impact in each domain.

One final concern is the potential impact on knowledge creation mechanisms and incentives. The split system of knowledge creators and knowledge disseminators risks

undermining the entire system of knowledge generation in management. Different groups, with different needs and different goals, may eventually give way to completely different systems for generation and dissemination. In an era when knowledge is becoming increasingly commoditized and widely available, the bifurcated model could speed the collapse of management research (and education) as we know it. Knowledge creation could be left in the hands of increasingly narrow schools of thought, guided by increasingly narrow orthodoxies. Or worse, other schools of thought and knowledge creation mechanisms (e.g., content aggregators), may arise, and the field of management could become a confused jumble of competing theories and models which the consuming public would be ill-prepared to sort through. Even though management science is a weak paradigm field (Glick, Miller & Cardinal, 2007; 2008), and a broad toolbox of theories, models and research approaches is understandable valuable, what we need are not more theories but more useful theories. A common refrain is that much of management research today is overly esoteric, with too many people answering too many questions that no one has asked, or about which few care (Pfeffer & Fong, 2002; Mohrman & Lawler, 2012). And yet faculty at exploitation focused institutions continue to aim for those very publication outlets for their work, using the same rational-empirical approaches, methods and models taught in graduate school. That, I believe, is a disservice to the stakeholders of exploitation institutions. And I believe it is a waste and a strategic misappropriation of resources to expend effort doing research that consumes much while providing little in return. Faculty at exploitation institutions should, and do, have more important, mission-focused things to do with their time. Dissemination models for knowledge exploitation are changing and moving quickly, perhaps faster than our collective ability to absorb and evaluate. Exploitation focused institutions are rightly concerned about their value proposition – will their teaching function be outsourced via MOOCs or technology-mediated platforms developed by large content aggregators?

DEFENDING LEGITIMACY AND IMPACT WITHIN DIFFERENTIATED MARKET DOMAINS

The essential problem is this – we don't spend enough time defending the legitimacy and impact of our work within our specific market domains. We speak too often as if we are all part of one academy, with one voice and one set of concerns. But we know that this is not true. It is understandable that we do not discuss these things, for we are all busy doing the job that our domains direct.

First, I think we need to dial the hyperbole down a notch. We are not near the end of business schools, we are not

hopelessly adrift, and what we do in our attempts to learn and grow as scholars is not crap. We are just two groups of faculty, in two (generally) different markets, doing the best we can with the resources available to meet the needs of our stakeholders. Faculty at the exploration focused institutions do wonderful and creative things to expand the body of knowledge in the management discipline, and I am proud to be associated with people who do such extraordinary things. And faculty at exploitation focused institutions, those who have more direct and potentially impactful customer-facing roles, do wonderful and creative things, too. Harping on one group because they don't do your thing well, whatever that thing may be, is not helpful. We (faculty) live in two different worlds, and what constitutes legitimate and impactful work in your world may be different than what is legitimate and impactful in mine. That is, and should continue to be, okay. The problem comes when we assume otherwise, or when faculty and administrations try to be and do things that do not fit their market environment. The primary focus of faculty at exploration institutions should be the production of new knowledge. The primary focus of faculty at exploitation institutions should be the dissemination of new knowledge and the management of the interface between theory and practice. Mission, vision and values should incorporate those distinct conceptions of strategic intent.

Second, the essential role of the Academy of Management should be to facilitate the work of faculty in both market domains. In this I do not mean that more attention should be paid to SoTL issues at the AOM conference or the development of journals like AMLE (though those efforts are a good start). But it is increasingly evident that once the majority of management educators progress to mid-career they interact less and less with the academy. We often measure impact via citation counts, but we are beginning to use other ways to measure impact (Aguinis, Suarez-Gonzalez, Lannelongue & Joo, 2012) and are not corroborating the general impression that citation counts equal impact. Understand, it is not that AOM does not do what it does well, it is just that it does not represent or support the majority of faculty at exploitation-focused institutions (the majority of management faculty).

In support of the goal of increasing the knowledge base in management, the academy must guard against intellectual isomorphism and closed-loop research output generation, and advocate for research diversity in terms of approaches, methods, models and outputs. Faculty in both market domains can help in this regard. Faculty at exploration institutions can be more open to the wide variety of traditional and non-traditional, quantitative and qualitative approaches to research available, and open to the teaching of those approaches in doctoral programs. We don't need more theories, we need better theories, and we'll

take them however we get them. The goal should be the same, but the path to that goal should not be constrained by rigid orthodoxies or intellectual sloth. Faculty at exploitation institutions have a say in this matter, as well. As boundary spanners, we should be focused on the rapid prototyping, testing and evaluation of evidence-based approaches to management in organizations. We are qualified to evaluate and report on research and theory-driven interventions, and so our feedback should provide a useful mechanism to close the loop between research and practice. At present, however, there are limited opportunities and venues to provide this feedback. We must be more vocal in communicating what we need, what works, what doesn't, and what we think should be done about it. I believe that faculty at exploitation institutions have been far too timid in this regard. For many, if a new concept or theory doesn't show up in the latest edition of a textbook, they don't discuss it. That has to change. We must be willing to propose, test and evaluate this new knowledge, and on a quicker timeline than a textbook revision schedule.

Third, we must begin to modify the conversation concerning legitimacy by adjusting the definition and measures of legitimacy and impact in the exploration domain (e.g., journal rankings, impact factors) to domain-specific measures of impact on stakeholders and constituents in the exploitation domain (e.g., business organizations improved, jobs saved?). The former are based on product-centric considerations, while the latter should be based on customer-centric considerations (Galbraith, 2005). Faculty at exploration institutions are already familiar with their "product" (significant discipline-based research). If you are a faculty member at an exploitation institution, think, for a moment, about what your students/stakeholders would say is important to them. Ask them how they should evaluate the service you provide. Impact is another word for difference, and their reply should be that you have made a positive difference in how they manage organizations. That would be legitimate. That would be powerful. How many of us can truthfully say that we have made a difference?

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